

English Proficiency of NEUST – SIC Students under BSIT Program: A Basis for Remedial Instruction

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Abstract - English has undeniably become one of the most widely spoken languages in the world, especially in the workplace. It is a necessary means of communication. To thrive in today's business world, you must be fluent in English. English is not something that can be learned in a day or two. Like every other language, it must be learned over time. This study aimed to identify the English Proficiency of first-year Bachelor of Science in Information Technology Students of Nueva Ecija University of Science and Technology, San Isidro Campus. The descriptive method of research was utilized on the results of the English proficiency test. Findings revealed that first-year BSIT students' scores in the English proficiency test are low and below the passing rate. However, it was found out that the relationship of the respondents' scores in terms of vocabulary, error analysis, correct usage, and reading comprehension is weak. It is highly recommended that Remedial Teaching Program in English Proficiency be formulated for the BSIT students of NEUST, San Isidro campus.

Keywords: English Proficiency, vocabulary, error analysis, correct usage, reading comprehension, remedial teaching

Introduction

English proficiency is one of the attributes that most companies consider in hiring employees, especially in business, marketing, entrepreneurship, and information technologies. Their top reason is globalization. English is the third most widely spoken globally, so people in every corner of the world consider having good communication using the said language. Although there are computer-related job opportunities for the Information Technology graduates, call centers provide open doors to them as their stepping stone. Thus, English proficiency is required because they will be dealing with people worldwide. Moreover, their computer expertise is already their edge in competing worldwide, and they will be even more globally competitive if they can communicate using English fluently.

The school serves as the training ground for students' English skills. Thus, all schools are mandated to adhere to Executive Order no. 210- Establishing the Policy to Strengthen the Use of the English Language as a Medium of Instruction in the Education System. Its objective is to develop the aptitude, competence, and proficiency of all students in using the English language to make them better prepared for the job opportunities emerging in the economy's new, technology-driven sectors.

The Philippines is widely regarded as one of the world's largest English-speaking countries, with most of its people fluent in the language. English has long been one of the Philippines' official

languages, and over 14 million Filipinos speak it. It is the industrial and legal language, as well as the primary medium of instruction in schools. However, in a recent roundtable discussion arranged by the British Council, key players from the government, academics, private, and non-government sectors agreed that, although the Philippines is doing well in terms of English competency, questions were raised about how much of a competitive advantage it really is for the region (Cabigon, 2015).

Many academic studies done in different Asian countries have shown that English improves work efficiency and increases one's advancement chances. Weak English language skills slow down the flow of efficient communication, trigger misinterpretation, generate confusion and create barriers among employees (Miina , 2014)

In today's world, we can't see ourselves without the two E's – English and Electronic Communication. Since it is adopted by both developed and emerging countries, the English language has increased in importance. According to studies, about 375 million people use English as a first language, and 750 million use English as a second language (Nagia, 2016). The English language is the only way to reach the worlds of science, knowledge, commerce, and culture. So, to get an excellent job in any business, it is now necessary to know English and speak well to express one self. It becomes a measure of one's ability.

In light of the above, this research was carried out to assess the English Proficiency of Information Technology students at the Nueva Ecija University of Science and Technology, San Isidro campus. The result served as a foundation for a Remedial Teaching Program in English to provide guidance and train them as internationally qualified workers in the future.

Objectives of the Study

This study aims to identify the English Proficiency of first-year Bachelor of Science Technology at Nueva Ecija University of Science and Technology, San Isidro Campus. The result of this study will be used as a basis for Remedial Instruction in English Program. Specifically, this study aims to address the following objectives:

1. Identify the profile of the respondents in terms of:
 - 1.1. Gender
 - 1.2. Secondary school graduated
2. Identify the English proficiency of the respondents in terms of the following domains:
 - 2.1. Vocabulary
 - 2.2. Error analysis
 - 2.3. Correct usage
 - 2.4. Reading comprehension

3. Identify the relationship of the respondents' English proficiency among the four domains.
4. Identify the overall English proficiency of the BSIT first-year students.
5. Develop a Remedial Instruction in English Program for BSIT students

Significance of the Study

This study will help the first-year BSIT students improve their English competence through the remedial instruction program that will be provided by the BSIT English teachers of NEUST-San Isidro Campus. This will also help students raise their confidence and perform well in academics and co-curricular activities. Further, students will be able to recognize their strengths and limitations in using English as a second language based on the study's findings.

Scope and Delimitations of the Study

This study aims to evaluate the English proficiency of first-year BSIT students at Nueva Ecija University of Science and Technology in terms of vocabulary, error analysis, correct usage, and reading comprehension for the second semester of the academic year 2016-2017.

Materials and Methods

Research Design

The descriptive method of research was utilized in this study. Results were presented in tables and aimed at highlighting the English proficiency of the BSIT first-year students, particularly their vocabulary, error analysis, correct usage, and reading comprehension. Scores were tallied, analyzed, and interpreted. Descriptive statistics such as frequency counts, ranking, and percentage were used. The passing score in each domain is 10 points and above; the overall passing score is 40 points and above.

Respondents of the Study:

The study's participants were all first-year Bachelor of Information Technology students enrolled during the academic year 2016-2017's second semester.

Data Collection:

A teacher-made test divided into four domains: vocabulary, error analysis, correct usage, and reading comprehension were distributed to the respondents through google forms. Results were retrieved from the google forms, then recorded and tallied for presentation, analysis, interpretation, and discussion.

Statistical Treatment of Data

Data gathered were tallied, analyzed, and interpreted. Descriptive statistics such as frequency counts, ranking, and percentage were used from the formula given as:

$$P = \frac{f}{N} \times 100\%$$

Where: P = percentage

f = frequency

N = total number of responses/respondents

Results

Table 1.1 Profile of the Respondents in Terms of Gender

<i>Gender</i>	<i>No. of Respondents</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Male	95	76.6%
Female	29	23.4%
Total	124	100%

Table 1.1 presents the gender frequency and percentage distribution of the respondents. Ninety-five (95) or 76.6 % of the respondents were males, and twenty-nine (29) or 23.4 % of the respondents were females.

Table 1.2. Profile of the Respondents in Terms of Secondary School Graduated

<i>Secondary School Graduated</i>	<i>No. of Respondents</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Public	81	65.3%
Private	43	34.7%
Total	124	100%

Table 1.2 presents the school where the respondents finished their secondary education. Eighty-one or 65.3% of the respondents graduated from public secondary schools, while forty-three or 34.7% were from private secondary schools.

Table 2 English Proficiency of the Respondents in Terms of Vocabulary, Error Analysis, Correct Usage and Reading Comprehension

<i>Domains</i>	<i>Number of</i>			<i>Passing Percentage</i>
	<i>Passed</i>	<i>Failed</i>	<i>TOTAL</i>	
Vocabulary	71	53	124	57%
Error Analysis	5	119	124	4%
Correct Usage	37	87	124	30%
Reading Comprehension	22	102	124	18%

Table 2 revealed the results of the English proficiency test taken by the respondents. In terms of vocabulary, seventy-one (71) or 57 % of respondents passed the test, while in terms of error analysis, correct usage and reading comprehension got below fifty percent (50%) below passing percentage. In error analysis, only five (5) respondents or 4% were able to pass the test; in correct usage, only thirty-seven (37) or 30 % out of 124 respondents got the passing rate; and only twenty(22) or 18% of the respondents got the passing rate. These findings imply that majority of the respondents can identify the meaning of words as used in sentences.

Table 3 Relationship of the English Proficiency of the Respondents Along Four Domains

<i>Domains</i>	<i>Value of R</i>	<i>Verbal Interpretation</i>
Vocabulary and Error Analysis	.40	Positive correlation but weak relationship
Vocabulary and Correct Usage	.49	Positive correlation but weak relationship
Vocabulary and Reading Comprehension	.36	Positive correlation but weak relationship
Error Analysis and Correct Usage	.37	Positive correlation but weak relationship
Error Analysis and Reading Comprehension	.30	Positive correlation but weak relationship
Correct Usage and Reading Comprehension	.37	Positive correlation but weak relationship

Table 3 revealed the relationship of the results of the English proficiency test of the respondents along with different domains.

Figure 1. Overall English Proficiency of the Respondents

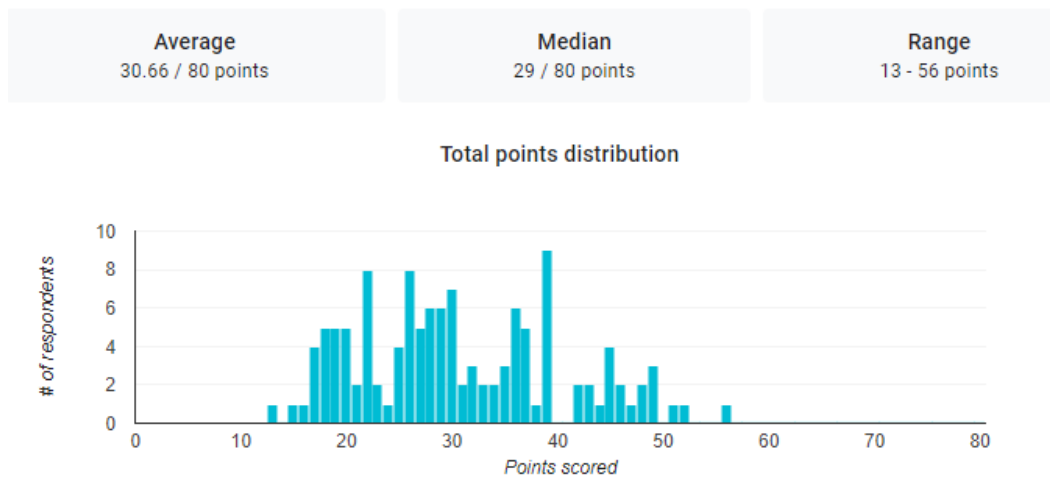


Figure 1 reveals that the majority of the respondents' scores are within 40% of the total items of the English proficiency test administered to them. This implies that the respondents' English proficiency is below the passing score, which is 50% of the total score.

Discussion

The majority of the respondents of this study were males, and most of them finished their secondary education in public schools. Among the four domains included in the English proficiency test, only the vocabulary was able to pass by the respondents, as presented in Table 2. However, the result was not impressive because it is just within the borderline of the passing rate, which is 50% of the total items. This implies that the respondents have difficulties in getting the meaning of the words as used in sentences. Learners at the beginner level of English proficiency generate common words, basic phrases, and simple sentences that may or may not be grammatically correct (Borabo, 2012). They are also characterized as having small vocabularies and a lack of understanding of grammar, punctuation, and capitalization. Most people cannot tell the difference between a "noun" and a "verb." Their English is so shattered that they make grammatical errors that grammarians have yet to identify (Cruz, 2004). The respondents' waterloo was revealed to be error analysis, right use, and reading comprehension, with error analysis receiving just a 5% passing score. Verb tense, sentence form, contractions, punctuation, grammar, and word use errors distract from the meaning one is trying to convey. (everydaylife.globalpost.com/Dowd)

Similarly, speaking or writing in a grammatically incorrect way may be as perplexing as learning a foreign language (English.answers.com). One of the reasons for students' inability to comprehend what they learn is a lack of sentence structure. When the sentences in the reading selection are short and the basic parts of the sentences are not changed, the student will have little trouble understanding the selection; but, when phrases and clauses complicate the sentence structure, the student will have more difficulty understanding the selection, that simply amplify and qualify the key concepts, a student who is unfamiliar with the structural elements that make up a sentence and their relationships to one another will struggle to understand what he is reading. Furthermore, for successful reading, a large reading vocabulary is needed (Reyes,2004).

However, table 3 revealed that among the four domains included in the English proficiency test, there is a weak relationship between vocabulary and error analysis; vocabulary and correct usage; vocabulary and reading comprehension; error analysis and correct usage; error analysis and reading comprehension; and correct usage and reading comprehension. Each respondent's scores in each domain is not associated with the other domains.

Table. Proposed Remedial Teaching in English Program for BSIT Students

REMEDIAL TEACHING PLAN IN ENGLISH

Time	03-Sep	10-Sep	17-Sep	24-Sep	01-Oct	08-Oct	15-Oct
1:00-2:00	VOCABULARY DEVELOPMENT Spelling Rules	READING COMPREHENSION Proof Reading	CORRECT USAGE Present and Past Tenses and Progressive Form	READING COMPREHENSION Proof Reading	CORRECT USAGE Prepositions, Conjunctions and Interjections	READING COMPREHENSION Proof Reading	VOCABULARY DEVELOPMENT Compound Elements
2:00-3:00	ERROR ANALYSIS The Writing Process	VOCABULARY DEVELOPMENT Spelling Problem Words	READING COMPREHENSION Proof Reading	ERROR ANALYSIS Narrative Writing	READING COMPREHENSION Proof Reading	VOCABULARY DEVELOPMENT Roots, Prefixes, and Suffixes	ERROR ANALYSIS Writing Directions for a Process
3:00-4:00	CORRECT USAGE Actions Verbs and Linking Verbs	ERROR ANALYSIS Arranging and Organizing Ideas	VOCABULARY DEVELOPMENT Improving Your Spelling	CORRECT USAGE Adverbs that modify Verbs	VOCABULARY DEVELOPMENT Using Specific and General Context	ERROR ANALYSIS Writing a Request Letter	CORRECT USAGE Capitalization
4:00-5:00	READING COMPREHENSION Proof Reading	CORRECT USAGE Transitive and Intransitive Verbs	ERROR ANALYSIS Modes of Writing Descriptive Writing	VOCABULARY DEVELOPMENT Interpreting Clue Words in Context	ERROR ANALYSIS Persuasive Writing	CORRECT USAGE Clauses and Complex Sentences	READING COMPREHENSION Proof Reading

Table 4 illustrates the matrix of the remedial instruction in English program for BSIT students of NEUST-San Isidro campus. Remedial teaching will be held during students' free time wherein different topics will be discussed by English teachers. Students will be given modules to be accomplished at home. The program will be conducted from September 3 to October 15, 2018. Assessment will be administered at the end of the program to determine the students' progress.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Among the four domains included in the English Proficiency test, only the vocabulary domain got the passing rate which is 57% of the total respondents. Further, there is a weak relationship in the English proficiency performance of the respondents in terms of vocabulary, error analysis, correct usage, and reading comprehension. Formulation of Remedial Teaching in English Language Proficiency is needed to help students improve their understanding and use of English as a second language.

Based on the study's findings, it is highly recommended that the NEUST-San Isidro campus should develop and improve the students' English language skills by providing a Remedial Teaching program. A similar study should be conducted with the same respondents after two years to validate the success of remedial measures. A study on English speaking skills proficiency of the same respondents is recommended to use as a basis for another remedial teaching program.

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